

# NEVADA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

## Minutes of Meeting July 17, 2002

A meeting of the Nevada County Transportation Commission was held on Wednesday, July 17, 2002, scheduled for 8:30 a.m., in the City of Nevada City Council Chambers, 317 Broad Street, Nevada City, California.

Members Present: Kerry Arnett, Ann Guerra, Chet Krage, \*Elizabeth Martin, Linda Stevens, Josh Susman, Peter Van Zant

Staff Present: Dan Landon, Executive Director; Michael Woodman, Transportation Planner; Toni Perry, Administrative Assistant

Staff Absent: Nancy Holman, Administrative Services Officer

Standing Orders: Chairman Van Zant convened the Nevada County Transportation Commission meeting at 8:36 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS: For discussion and possible action.

1. Financial Reports: Due to the year-end accounting process, the June 2002 financial report will be presented at the next meeting.

No comments.

2. Correspondence:

- L. NADO Legislative Action Alert – Regarding revised Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) rule for rural transportation planning, 7/10/02.

FHWA is accepting local comments on proposed supplemental guidelines to implement the 1998 TEA-21 law that calls on states to enhance their consultation practices with rural local officials. The Commission directed staff to send a letter supporting the NADO position.

3. Executive Director's Report:

\*Commissioner Martin arrived at 8:40 a.m.

### Updated Land Use Information

Executive Director Landon stated the cities and county general plans have been completed and delivered to the modeler for traffic projections. Data will then be forwarded to Caltrans for their use in the Dorsey Drive interchange analysis. Capacity analysis and level of service reports are being prepared by the modeler to update the Regional Transportation Mitigation Fee project list.

### SR 49 Widening-Heritage Poles for the Wolf/Combie Rd/SR 49 Intersection

Caltrans has agreed to provide heritage poles for this intersection. A discussion continues between Caltrans and Nevada County regarding future maintenance and replacement of the

poles. Commissioner Arnett asked staff to investigate the cost of replacing the standard Caltrans lights at the North Bloomfield/SR 49 intersection with the same heritage luminaries proposed at the Wolf/Combie Road intersection.

#### Responses to Questions Regarding State Highway Design Standards

Commissioner Stevens had raised two questions. One pertained to the feasibility of a divided highway just south of McKnight Way down to Alta Sierra to preserve trees along this section of SR 49. Caltrans Project Manager Tom Brannon stated the Project Development Team will be meeting to draw up plans for this section. Commissioners Krage and Stevens asked to be included in this meeting.

The second question from Commissioner Stevens related to having 8 foot paved shoulders on two-lane state highways to improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians. Tom Brannon stated the standard on all rebuilt projects includes 8 foot shoulders. If the project is just a repair, there is no additional money for widening, but the city or county could add in money for bike/pedestrian lanes. Caltrans liaison Ann Marie Robinson stated that her office is putting together a master plan for bikes and trails and will incorporate our existing pedestrian and bicycle plans into this document. Executive Director Landon stated staff will collect information on projects where paths or shoulders could be added and bring it back to the Commission with options of how to proceed.

#### Status of Widening and Channelization on SR 20 at Uren Street

Commissioner Arnett asked if it were too late to consider heritage poles/lights at this intersection. Tom Brannon stated that temporary poles would be installed initially and he would take this concern back to Caltrans. Mr. Brannon will update staff on whether or not heritage poles can be used on this project.

#### Heritage Status for SR 49

House Bill 3425 proposes to fund a feasibility study on the concept of making SR 49 a National Heritage Corridor from Vinton in Plumas County to Oakhurst in Madera County. Chairman Van Zant asked Executive Director Landon to investigate if there is any federal money available down the road to preserve a heritage status roadway.

#### SR 49 Gateway Project

Executive Director Landon stated that the South Nevada County Chamber of Commerce volunteered to be an ad hoc committee to help develop a concept for the South County Gateway Project and possibly raise funds. A discussion ensued among Commissioners as to the groups and individuals that should be included in the planning process as well as where the monument would be located. Chairman Van Zant asked Commissioners Krage and Stevens and NCTC staff to meet with the South Nevada County Chamber to establish a concept of design and bring it back to the Commission. Executive Director Landon will also work with Tom Brannon to define the process that will need to be followed and Caltrans participation in this project.

#### Schedule for NCTC Meetings

A suggestion was made by a member of the public at the last meeting to consider having several NCTC evening meetings a year. The Commission decided to hold an evening

meeting in Grass Valley on October 16<sup>th</sup> before deciding to schedule evening meetings for 2003.

4. Caltrans District 3 Project Status Report – Tom Brannon, Project Manager:

Tom Brannon introduced himself as the new Project Manager for Nevada County. Mr. Brannon also introduced Gerald Kracher as the Assistant Project Manager for Nevada and Sierra Counties. The following projects were discussed:

SR 20 Widening Yuba County Line to Indian Springs Road - Mr. Brannon stated this project is just underway in terms of developing the Project Approval Environmental Document (PA/ED). Commissioner Martin asked to be invited to the planning meetings. She stated that she felt the citizens should be allowed to give input on the dangers of driveway and encroachment issues.

Dorsey Drive Interchange - Mr. Brannon stated he thinks the schedule for the PA/ED has slipped to where the start date of February 2006 may be at risk. Chairman Van Zant requested Mr. Brannon to keep Mr. Landon updated on all issues that could delay the project. Mr. Brannon promised to provide a current status on this project to Mr. Landon in two weeks.

SR 49 from Wolf/Combie Road to Grass Valley - Mr. Brannon stated that the next step for this project is to schedule the environmental study in order to assess issues and problems. It is possible Caltrans may not have the staff to do the study and therefore a consultant may be considered. Commissioners Martin, Krage, and Stevens requested to participate in the environmental clearance aspect of this project.

SR 267 Truckee Bypass, Truckee Ramps, Relinquishment of Existing SR 267, and Landscape Mitigation Project - Mr. Brannon stated the SR 267 Bypass would have traffic on it by this fall. Negotiations regarding maintenance agreements with the Town of Truckee will follow for both the relinquishment of the old section of SR 267 to the Town and for landscape plans.

SR 89 Truckee Mousehole and I-80/SR 89 Roundabouts - Mr. Brannon stated he is working with Caltrans environmental and design staff regarding the "Mousehole" project which may be contracted out to a consultant. He will bring cost proposals back to the Town of Truckee and NCTC for review. Also, the Town, NCTC, and Caltrans are working on a possible roundabout solution for traffic issues at the SR 89/I-80 junction.

SR 49 at Wolf/Combie/Bear River Bridge Project - Mr. Brannon stated that this project is out to bid and Caltrans should secure a signed contract with a contractor in August. Commissioner Krage inquired if they would try to complete improvements at this intersection by the end of this construction season. Mr. Brannon responded he would try to facilitate completion of intersection improvements this construction season.

5. Workshop: Transit Development Plans (TDP)

Eastern Nevada County Transit Development Plan:

Gordon Shaw, President and Principal of LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. presented recommendations included in the five-year plan update. His comments included the issue of projected funding shortfalls under status quo conditions and whether available funds would be

adequate to continue current services for the next five years. Mr. Shaw posed solutions to the question of where to trim services as well as how to provide capital for replacement buses. He stated there is no federal or state funding programs for replacement of vehicles. Discussion included replacing the trolleys and possible planning for a maintenance garage in Truckee versus having maintenance performed at South Lake Tahoe. Commissioner Guerra stated she would like NCTC staff to be sure Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) representatives understand what is being proposed.

10:10 a.m. - Ten Minute Break

#### Western Nevada County Transit Development Plan:

Geoff Straw of LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. presented recommendations for the five-year plan update. He stated the need to cut back current services due to a projected funding shortfall under the status quo and schedule adherence problems. Recommendations included restructuring routes, seeking financial partnership with other agencies on certain routes, creating a zone fare system, and replacing CNG buses and the trolleys.

A discussion ensued among Commissioners, staff, and the consultant regarding the sale of monthly passes on buses and how that affects on-time service. It was recommended to increase the pass price, and offer two passes; a pass for local services and a second pass at a higher fare for longer trips. A zone study was recommended to be conducted within western Nevada County for Telecare and Gold Country Stage services to come up with recommended fares for longer trips.

Commissioner Martin suggested we contact core ridership to involve them in the design and proposed changes to the overall transit system. Harriet McKay, an SSTAC member in the audience, encouraged SSTAC involvement in these decisions and proposed a public workshop as well. Chairman Van Zant agreed. Commissioner Susman stated he would like to see a workshop based on solutions versus recommendations and to identify the actual current status and how to go forward.

Commissioner Krage asked for details on the exact number of vehicles needed to perform Gold Country Stage services and asked for specifics on financial constraints identified over the next five years. He voiced a concern over the alternative fuel issues and higher maintenance costs pertaining to the CNG buses. Michael Hill-Weld, Director of DOTS for Nevada County, stated he spoke with the California Transportation Commission (CTC) regarding the CNG buses and is working with the vendor on potential solutions. Mr. Hill-Weld will advise the Commission of the outcome. Mr. Hill-Weld reminded the Commission a fulltime transit services manager has not been hired so many of the implementation steps in the western Nevada County TDP could take longer than projected.

Commissioner Guerra suggested considering the purchase of future vehicles with faster wheelchair loading and unloading capability to help address on-time performance issues.

#### Public Comments Related to Eastern and Western Transit Development Plans

Paul Mucci, a SSTAC member, stated he liked the idea of a public workshop since the western Nevada County TDP proposed profound changes. He feels funding is most crucial and believes services should be increased and fares decreased to increase ridership. Mr. Mucci would like bus passes continued to be sold on the bus and feels it is the responsibility of passengers not to lose their monthly passes. He also expressed concerns about the proposed changes to Route 2. Chairman Van Zant suggested Mr. Mucci write his suggestions and submit them to staff.

Jerry Mehren, a SSTAC member, suggested Route 3 run hourly to Silver Springs High School versus the current half hour run which can cause schedule delays.

CONSENT ITEMS:

6. NCTC Minutes: June 19, 2002. *Approved.*
7. Resolution of Appreciation: Perry Christensen, Director of Nevada County Transit Services Department. *Resolution 02-27 adopted.*
8. Allocation Request from Nevada City: Nevada City is requesting an allocation of \$55,120 from the Local Transportation Fund for transit and paratransit services for FY 2002/03. *Resolution 02-28 adopted.*

Motion made by Commissioner Martin to approve the consent items and seconded by Commissioner Guerra. Commissioner Krage abstained from approving the minutes. *Motion passed..*

ACTION ITEMS:

9. Proposal to Provide Financial Advisory Services - Arthur Bauer and Associates:

Ed Sylvester, Chairman of the Nevada County Business Association, was present and voiced his support of Arthur Bauer and Associates along with Barbara Bashall, Executive Director of the Nevada County Contractors' Association.

Arthur Bauer stated that his company helps organizations effectively use their money to advance projects and programs important to the community. Their "innovative finance" concept helps identify new funding resources. Executive Director Landon will provide Arthur Bauer and Associates with a list of priority projects within Nevada County. Mr. Bauer will look at current revenue sources, perform a revenue gap analysis, identify alternative funding opportunities, and create a report referring to projects and potential funding in order of importance.

Motion made by Commissioner Stevens to authorize the Executive Director to sign a contract between NCTC and Arthur Bauer and Associates to proceed with the transportation finance study. Motion seconded by Commissioner Martin. *Motion passed unanimously.*

10. Annual Transit Needs Assessment:

Review and approve the revised Nevada County 2002/03 FY Transit Needs Assessment and adopt Resolution 02-29.

Motion made by Commissioner Krage to *defer Resolution 02-29* until the SSTAC is able to reach a decision based on a quorum vote. Motion seconded by Commissioner Martin. *Motion passed unanimously to defer Resolution 02-29.*

Public Comments Related to Annual Transit Needs Assessment:

Paul Mucci stated he understands that the County fare box ratio is higher than the state ratio and would like to see it adjusted to possibly allow a lower standard when assessing transit needs that are, or are not, reasonable to meet.

Ric Morales, Chief of Caltrans TDA Oversight Branch, stated concerns over the Joint Powers Agreement language that limits the financial contributions of the Local Transportation Fund from Nevada City and Grass Valley.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Paul Mucci brought it to the attention of the Commission that any diesel engine can be converted to burn vegetable oil and suggested that idea be considered as an option.

COMMISSION ANNOUNCEMENTS:

No comments.

SCHEDULE FOR NEXT MEETING

Commissioner Krage made a motion to not hold an August 2002 meeting. Commissioner Martin seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, September 18, 2002 at 9:30 a.m., in the Town of Truckee Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING:

Chairman Van Zant adjourned the meeting at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted: \_\_\_\_\_  
Antoinette Perry, Administrative Assistant

Approved on: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Peter Van Zant, Chairman  
Nevada County Transportation Commission